

INQUIRY INTO DETERGENTS

BOARD OF TRADE ACTION

From Our Political Correspondent

Two steps of interest to consumers and housewives were announced by the President of the Board of Trade in written answers to the Commons yesterday.

First, he has referred the supply of household detergents and the supply and processing of colour film to the Monopolies Commission for investigation and report.

Secondly, he announced the names of seven members of the new Consumer Council, under the chairmanship of Lady Elliot of Harwood.

Both announcements come in good time for the Commons debate next Monday on consumer questions. The Board of Trade reference defines household detergents as powder, liquids and flakes made up for sale by retail for use in the home in the washing of clothes, crockery and cooking utensils. But it excludes borax, sodium carbonate, ammonia solutions, bleaching solutions, and sodium hexametaphosphate.

Colour film is defined as sensitized positive or negative stock, on a base other than paper, for use (otherwise than in the cinematograph film industry) for colour photography and made up for sale by retail otherwise than as flat film.

EVIDENCE INVITED

It is the duty of the Monopolies Commission to inquire into the effect on the public interest of monopoly situations—an expression which means a situation where a single firm or group is responsible for at least a third of the supply or processing of particular products.

Announcing the latest references, the Board of Trade invite any person or organization wishing to offer evidence to write to the secretary, Monopolies Commission, 8, Cornwall Terrace, Regent's Park, London, N.W.1.

Two references are already before the commission: the solus sites system for petrol sales, and wallpaper. A report on the supply of electrical goods is being prepared for publication during the summer.

£500 A YEAR

The seven members now appointed to the Consumer Council are:—

Mr. Leonard Cohen, chairman and joint managing director, Henry's Stores, Ltd.

Mr. R. Craig Wood, director of A.E.I., chairman and managing director of A.E.I.-Hotpoint Ltd.

Mr. Cynog Jones, head of research department, Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers.

Mrs. Winifred Jenkins, wife of former headmaster of Queen Elizabeth's School, Barnet, and chairman of women's advisory committee, B.S.I.

Mr. Grigor McClelland, research fellow in management studies, Balliol College, Oxford.

Lord Peddie, chairman, Co-operative Party, and C.W.S. director.

Mrs. Philippa Perks, W.V.S. centre organizer for Clevedon, Bristol.

All members of the Consumer Council will be paid £500 a year, if they wish. Mr. Erroll, President of the Board of Trade, intends to make three further appointments soon.

Principal manufacturers of synthetic detergents, soap powders, and soap flakes are Thomas Hedley (Daz, Dreft, Tide, Oxydol, and Fairy Snow), Unilever (Omo, Surf, Persil, Rinso, and Lux), Bibby (Clozone), and Colgate (Fab).

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